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Official Records

Disarmament Commission
304th meeting
Monday, 29 March 2010, 3 p.m.
New York

Chairman: Mr. Zinsou ..... (Benin)

The meeting was called to order at 3.15 p.m.

Organization of work (*continued*)

The Chairman (*spoke in French*): Before we resume the general debate, I should like to remind delegates that they have until 6 p.m. today to inscribe themselves on the list of speakers. Furthermore, the cut-off date for the submission of names for the list of participants is Wednesday 31 March, 2010, at 6 p.m. Delegations that have not yet done so are asked to inscribe themselves on the list of speakers and to present their delegation lists as soon as possible.

General exchange of views (*continued*)

Mr. Haroon (Pakistan): The delegation of Pakistan congratulates you, Sir, upon your election to the prestigious position of Chairman of the Disarmament Commission. Your association with the Commission bodies bodes well for this year's deliberations. I also wish to felicitate other members of the Bureau as well as the Chairs of the two Working Groups. We wish to assure you of our utmost cooperation.

We deeply appreciate the valuable work done by the United Nations Office for Disarmament Affairs (UNODA) under the able guidance of Ambassador Sergio Duarte, High Representative for Disarmament Affairs.

Pakistan aligns itself with the statement made by Indonesia on behalf of the Non-Aligned Movement.

There is no gainsaying the fact that the Disarmament Commission is the sole multilateral deliberative body within the United Nations disarmament machinery. However, we occasionally encounter criticism of this body. While all human institutions have room for improvement, the perceived deficiency can be attributed more to a lack of political will than to the United Nations disarmament machinery. Only through genuine respect for the principle of equal security for all can we make meaningful progress on disarmament and non-proliferation. Deliberations and negotiations within the ambit of the United Nations disarmament machinery cannot proceed further if we try to bury, obfuscate or side-step genuine security concerns to push through a mirage of disarmament- and non-proliferation-related progress.

It is difficult to remember that threat perceptions and security concerns are not figments of a State's imagination. They are deeply rooted in historical legacy and geopolitical factors. What may be of academic interest to one player may be an existential question to another. Accordingly, it would stand the international community in good stead to understand the compulsions that drive a country's strategic outlook. Pakistan, for instance, has a defensive military posture. We have no great power ambition, but at the same time our historical experience has taught us the value of credible deterrence, albeit the bare minimum.

It is very important to guard against the tendency to castigate the United Nations disarmament machinery and clamouring for alternative extra-United Nations mechanisms. Quite often, we encounter the refrain that

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if deliberations and negotiations in the United Nations disarmament machinery do not subscribe to certain world views, the machinery or parts thereof will find themselves under the guillotine of redundancy. Let us not forget that, notwithstanding its perceived and real imperfections, the United Nations and its subsidiary bodies make up the sole truly global entity.

That is why consensual decisions, forged together with patience and a spirit of genuine compromise under the aegis of the United Nations, enjoy timeless legitimacy, as is true of such landmark documents such as the Final Outcome (resolution S/10/2) of the first special session of the General Assembly devoted to disarmament (SSOD-I). Decisions taken outside the United Nations cannot be raised to the same level with the loudest protestations of nobility of objectives. It is also of utmost importance to remember that pressure and publicity cannot and should not relegate the highest priorities to the background, while less important issues are presented as virtual panaceas.

As Pakistan has repeatedly asserted in this forum, the international community needs to revive the consensus that gave us SSOD-I. Such a consensus cannot come about without giving due importance to various facets of the disarmament debate. As proposed earlier, we would like to see a special international conference that would tackle all issues on the table with correct prioritization to resuscitate global consensus on disarmament and non-proliferation.

Such a consensus can carry value only if it establishes a clear road map for disarmament by nuclear-weapon States; ends discriminatory treatment of non-proliferation issues; makes the relationship between States parties to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT) and nuclear-weapon States not parties to the NPT concordant with reality; halts vertical proliferation; guarantees every State's right to the peaceful use of nuclear energy; tackles all aspects of the missile debate, including the question of missile defence systems; outlaws outer space militarization, including the manufacture and deployment of anti-satellite weapons; earnestly addresses the question of conventional imbalance; strengthens the United Nations Programme of Action to Prevent, Combat and Eradicate the Illicit Trade in Small Arms and Light Weapons in All Its Aspects; strengthens the United Nations disarmament machinery; and tackles the issue of fissile material through a non-discriminatory, multilateral and internationally and effectively verifiable treaty banning the production of fissile material for nuclear weapons or other nuclear explosive devices, including the issue of asymmetries in stockpiles. The fissile material cut-off treaty should be a genuine disarmament and not a limited non-proliferation measure.

We are heartened by the progress made thus far in the current three-year cycle of the Disarmament Commission. We have a clear agenda and, under the able leadership of the Chairs of the two Working Groups, the deliberations appear to be headed in the right direction. We are proud of the positive contributions made by the Non-Aligned Movement. We also remain committed to wholeheartedly participating in the discussions in our national capacity.

We have noted with interest the recent positive changes in the atmospherics of the disarmament and non-proliferation debate. However, we also are acutely mindful of the fact that changes in declaratory positions must be translated into concrete actions. While Pakistan is ready to do its part, countries with the highest conventional and unconventional capabilities should set the tone by facilitating concrete progress on all relevant issues. Serious engagement, rather than polemics and cherry-picking, is the order of the day.

Mr. Churkin (Russian Federation) (*spoke in Russian*): First, I would like to join my Pakistani colleague in congratulating you, Mr. Chairman.

The work of our forum is taking place at a time when, after a long period of paralysis in the disarmament and non-proliferation sphere, we have begun to see positive trends. It is important to strengthen this notable yet still very fragile progress. We are convinced that the best way to do so lies in furthering active multilateral diplomacy, strengthening existing international disarmament mechanisms, and creating new ones where necessary.

The Russian Federation considers the United Nations Disarmament Commission to be an integral and important element of the multilateral disarmament mechanism of the United Nations, mandated to develop recommendations for the General Assembly with respect to the main problems in the area of disarmament and non-proliferation. With respect to the current three-year cycle of the Commission's work, we note with satisfaction that we were able to agree on its agenda. Given the aforementioned positive trends, we believe that this will make it possible to discuss in-

depth the most relevant problems of multilateral disarmament and non-proliferation. With respect to the agenda item on elements of a draft declaration of the 2010s as the fourth disarmament decade, we believe that the option of a Chairman's document will be a good basis for further work and a productive outcome.

In the context of the consideration of specific items on our agenda, I wish to set out Russia's corresponding priorities.

Russia has worked consistently to reduce its nuclear arsenal. Its obligations under such epochal agreements as the 1987 Treaty between the United States of America and the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics on the Elimination of Their Intermediate-range and Shorter-range Missiles and the 1991 Treaty between the United States of America and the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics on the Reduction and Limitation of Strategic Offensive Arms have been fully fulfilled. We believe it necessary to move methodically towards real nuclear disarmament, as called for by the provisions of the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT), in particular article VI.

One important event was the recent conclusion of preparations of an agreement between the United States and the Russian Federation on measures to further reduce and limit strategic offensive weapons, the signing of which will take place on 8 April in Prague by the Presidents of the United States of America and Russia. The main task was undertaken on the basis of parity while observing the principle of equal and indivisible security leading to an agreement on genuine reductions of strategic offensive weapons. The new agreement will demonstrate the commitment of both States to reducing their strategic offensive arsenals in accordance with the spirit and letter of the NPT.

We are sympathetic to initiatives aimed at achieving general and comprehensive nuclear disarmament. Such undertakings as Global Zero, the Hoover Initiative, the Evans/Kawaguchi International Commission on Nuclear Non-proliferation and Disarmament and others contain a number of elements that are in line with Russia's position on strengthening the NPT in order to resolve problems with global security on a multilateral basis. We are working with the authors of these initiatives and support a constructive dialogue with them.

At the same time, we believe that the complete elimination of nuclear weapons as the ultimate goal of a progressive, gradual process of general and complete disarmament can be achieved only on the basis of a comprehensive approach in favourable international conditions that observes the principles of strategic stability, equal and indivisible security for all States, and, in particular, the existing close relationship between strategic offensive and strategic defensive weapons.

We recognize the growing importance of resolving the problem of missile proliferation. However, we believe that the development of anti-missile shields is not the most effective way of countering the threat of missiles. Such an approach cannot turn back or even stop the proliferation of missiles, nor will it eliminate the motivation for some States to seek to obtain or build such weapons.

In our view, we must fight this serious international problem by pooling the efforts and resources of all interested States to prevent the transformation of existing missile challenges into genuine missile threats and to neutralize such challenges through the priority deployment of political and diplomatic measures and action. The first step in establishing such a collective security regime should be to make careful assessment of existing missile challenges. Russia, together with the United States and certain European countries, has already undertaken such an analysis. We trust that, at the appropriate stage, other interested States will make a contribution to this work.

We note here the high expectations that the international community attaches to strengthening the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT), which is the cornerstone of the collective security system. The work of the next Review Conference of the Parties to the NPT will begin shortly here in New York. The Conference is tasked with preparing a package of agreed and feasible measures that can contribute to further strengthening the nuclear non-proliferation regime on the basis of a carefully considered balance of all three pillars of the NPT: non-proliferation, disarmament and the peaceful use of nuclear energy. Achieving this will be possible only through joint efforts and the goodwill of all States parties to the Treaty.

We believe that, in the context of the most recent review of the NPT, we must formulate concrete parameters that would enable us to make progress towards nuclear disarmament. This would require

laying out simple and understandable conditions, such as settling regional conflicts; eliminating the motivation for States to seek nuclear weapons; controlling the increase in conventional weapons and attempts to use them to compensate for the reduction in nuclear systems; providing reliable guarantees for the ongoing relevance of key disarmament and non-proliferation mechanisms; and preventing an arms race in outer space. Also very relevant in this regard is Russia's initiative to concentrate nuclear weapons within the national territories of the States that possess them. Achieving this would make it possible to limit the number of regions where nuclear weapons exist. In other words, stepping up disarmament efforts is a task for all NPT States parties, nuclear and non-nuclear alike.

Nor must we overlook the role of States outside the Treaty in this process. We believe that, in the near future, Russian and American efforts to reduce their strategic nuclear weapons should be joined by all nuclear-weapon States. The contributions of non-nuclear-weapon States to creating a favourable environment for genuine nuclear disarmament are important.

Russia firmly upholds its commitments under the Intermediate Range Nuclear Forces Treaty. In October 2007, we presented an initiative to make the Treaty regime universal. This idea was supported by the United States, and we were thus able to distribute a joint declaration at the sixty-second session of the General Assembly. The Russian Federation prepared and submitted to the Conference on Disarmament a draft text on the basic elements of an international legal agreement on eliminating land-based intermediate and shorter-range missiles. We would propose carrying out a joint search for optimal measures to promote a global agreement on these weapons, and are ready for a constructive dialogue on this subject with all interested countries. We hope that the momentum in the NPT process will enable us to make progress on many other international agreements and initiatives related to the Treaty.

An important step in nuclear disarmament is the timely entry into force of the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty (CTBT). All the necessary conditions for its entry into force are in place, given the positive signals from the United States about a possible shift of position on the Treaty. We call insistently on all States, above all those upon whom the entry into force of the CTBT depends, to sign and ratify it without further delay and to subject themselves to a voluntary moratorium on nuclear tests. We would like to add that, although such a moratorium is very important, it cannot replace legally binding commitments in that regard.

An important next step towards strengthening the nuclear disarmament and non-proliferation regime — negotiations on preparing a draft treaty on the production of fissile materials for nuclear weapons — should begin shortly at the Conference on Disarmament. We must also expand regional nuclear-weapon-free zones. Our primary task should be to not allow nuclear materials and nuclear technology to fall into the hands of non-State actors, in particular terrorists. We must maintain the momentum of recent years in international cooperation based on Security Council resolution 1540 (2004) and of such international mechanisms as the Global Initiative to Combat Nuclear Terrorism and international export control regimes.

We would draw attention to the need to search for ways to implement the decisions already taken to strengthen the nuclear non-proliferation regime in the Middle East. Russia is a participant in the Middle East Quartet and has advanced, within the framework of the NPT Review Conference, concrete recommendations to the countries of the region on establishing a zone free of nuclear weapons and their means of delivery in the region. This could include the organizing of a conference or meeting of interested States with a view to considering ways to implement the conclusions of the 1995 NPT Review Conference; the designation of a special coordinator on this issue; the ratification of the CTBT by all States of the Middle East; their voluntary rejection of the development of sensitive elements in the nuclear fuel cycle; and the acceptance by all nuclear States of the region of the comprehensive safeguards of the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA). I note that the creation of a zone free of nuclear weapons and their means of delivery in the Middle East is necessary first and foremost for the security of States of the region. Our task is to provide them with maximal assistance, which is what we are doing in proposing such ideas.

There is a growing need throughout the world for energy, and nuclear energy can be used to meet this need. But there is also a proportionate increase in the proliferation risks related to States' exercise of their inalienable right to the use of nuclear energy for peaceful purposes. Efforts to exploit nuclear energy should not complicate efforts to prevent the uncontrolled spread of nuclear materials.

We believe that progress towards "global zero" will not be possible without efforts to build a contemporary and stable non-proliferation architecture for international cooperation in the nuclear sphere, based on the sound IAEA instruments for the verification of non-proliferation obligations and a multilateral approach to the nuclear fuel cycle. We believe it important to improve the effectiveness of the IAEA safeguards system and to universalize the Additional Protocol. These instruments should become universal norms for verifying observance with non-proliferation commitments and other general standards in the area of nuclear export controls.

Another focus of our efforts should be preventing the spread of sensitive technology that is directly related to the production of nuclear weapon materials and providing unhindered access for all NPT States parties to the use of peaceful nuclear energy so long as they fulfil their non-proliferation obligations in good faith.

The Russian Federation's initiative to develop global nuclear energy infrastructure is under way, as is the creation of international nuclear fuel cycle centres. An important step in that direction was the approval by the Board of Directors of the IAEA of the Russian Federation's proposal to create, under the auspices of the Agency, a guaranteed stockpile of low enriched uranium.

One of the priorities of the Russian Federation's policies on strengthening strategic stability and international security remains the prevention of the placement of weapons in outer space. We continue to insist that it is easier not to allow weapons to be placed in space than to deal with space debris later on.

The Russian-Chinese initiative on preventing an arms race in space was presented in a draft agreement that was officially submitted to the Conference on Disarmament. An overwhelming majority of States reacted positively to the key provisions of this draft. The next task is to develop a comprehensive discussion and to prepare for future agreements. We actively support the establishment within the Conference on Disarmament of an official working group for such discussions.

An important and integral part of preventing an arms race in outer space is developing confidence- and transparency-building measures. The adoption of such measures by the international community can be a first step in preventing an arms race in outer space, as first noted in the consensus resolution 64/49 of the General Assembly at its sixty-fourth session in 2009. Sixty-eight States sponsored that resolution. We believe that the further efforts of all interested States will help to create a comprehensive architecture for transparency and confidence-building measures in the sphere of disarmament and beyond.

We are confident that preventing the placement of weapons in outer space and developing transparency and confidence-building measures would help to ensure a predictable strategic situation and the safety of orbiting objects, in which States are undoubtedly interested.

One condition in moving towards global nuclear zero is eliminating the imbalance in conventional armed forces. In that context, one ongoing problem is the adaptability of the Treaty on Conventional Armed Forces in Europe (CFE) regime to the shifting realities and requirements of European security in recent years. Russia is doing its utmost to resolve that issue. However, negotiations have not yielded the desired results to date. The problem is that some of our partners seem to be in no hurry to start discussions on Russia's extremely concrete proposals, while Russia is already taking practical steps in their direction in exchange for promises to address these issues in the near future. We believe that, in order to overcome the CFE impasse, we need concrete and unequivocal commitments by States, not promises.

Russia firmly supports preserving the leading role of the United Nations in resolving the issue of the illicit trade in small arms and light weapons. As the sole international universal forum, only the United Nations can effectively coordinate the development of national legislation to prevent small arms and light weapons from falling into the wrong hands. All States must fully implement the United Nations Programme of Action to Prevent, Combat and Eradicate the Illicit Trade in Small Arms and Light Weapons in All Its Aspects. The upcoming Fourth Biennial Meeting of States in July this year will provide a good opportunity for an in-depth analysis of necessary measures in that regard.

We believe that the crux of the issue of small arms and light weapons is the existing channels whereby weapons fall into the illegal trade. In that connection, we believe that measures must be taken to

shut such channels down, and in particular to stop the production of small arms and light weapons under expired licences or without licence; prevent the transfer of weapons to non-State actors; promote the practice of verification by exporters of warehousing conditions and importers' use of sensitive types of small arms and light weapons; and strengthen brokering and re-export controls with respect to small arms and light weapons.

The United Nations Register of Conventional Arms remains an important transparency instrument that allows weapons transfers to be traced in order to prevent destabilizing stockpiles. Such an instrument offers further possibilities to develop effective dialogue among States with a view to eliminating concerns. On that basis, the Russian Federation observes its obligations and regularly submits information to the Register.

We support the universalization and strengthening of the Register. Unfortunately, technical aspects in the expansion of the Register's scope have been a cause of political concern of late, which has delayed its expansion. The Group of Governmental Experts on the Register would have made better progress in 2009 if States had focused on resolving the issue of the current Register's increasing effectiveness — and in particular on updating and consolidating its existing categories — and not on creating new ones. In-depth discussion within the United Nations of a document to regulate the arms trade revealed the scope of that question. The issues involved are many and complex, and require a gradual, phased approach.

We support the regulation of arms transfers. We do not rule out the possibility that the outcome of such work could be some sort of document, so long as its goals are clear and can be met by all and its tasks can be implemented in a practical way. Such a document should realistically help to resolve key issues with regard to conventional weapons. In our view, one main issue of the illicit trade is weapons falling into criminal hands in conflict regions where arms embargoes are in force.

The Russian delegation is ready for concrete work. We intend to make every effort to find mutually acceptable decisions.

Mr. Quinlan (Australia): First of all, let me, too, congratulate you, Sir, on your assumption of the chairmanship and assure you and the Bureau of my delegation's support in your work.

As I think most people know, Australia has a long history of activism on nuclear disarmament, the non-proliferation of weapons of mass destruction and conventional arms control issues. Multilateral engagement, particularly with the United Nations, is one of the explicitly defined pillars of our foreign policy, and we believe that the Disarmament Commission plays an important role in discussing crucial international security issues, particularly this year, when we have a very busy and significant agenda.

Obviously, nuclear disarmament and non-proliferation are inextricably linked. Preventing the spread of nuclear weapons creates an environment conducive to nuclear disarmament, while progress on disarmament sends positive messages to countries that have chosen not to develop nuclear weapons.

The Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT) is the cornerstone of that global nuclear non-proliferation and disarmament regime, and it is crucial that the upcoming Review Conference of the Parties to the NPT achieve strong outcomes that will strengthen the Treaty and reaffirm its central role, which has delivered concrete global security benefits for 37 years. Forging agreement at the Review Conference on practical outcomes under each of the NPT's three pillars would represent substantive progress towards the ultimate goal of a nuclear-weapon-free world. It is imperative that the disappointing outcome of the 2005 Review Conference be avoided at all costs.

As our own contribution, Australia and Japan have developed a package of practical disarmament and non-proliferation measures for the Review Conference. The joint package includes a renewed call on nuclear-armed States to immediately begin reducing the number and strategic role of their nuclear arsenals and to work towards the ultimate goal of the total elimination of nuclear weapons. It also urges States to negotiate other complementary agreements and to commit to further practical measures that would strengthen the nuclear disarmament and non-proliferation regime. In consultation with other partners, Australia and Japan will work to ensure that the package is embodied in the final document of the Review Conference.

Australia and Japan have also established the International Commission on Nuclear Non-Proliferation and Disarmament, chaired by former Foreign Ministers

Kawaguchi and Evans, which has recently issued its independent report, based on the consensus of its 15 international commissioners. The report contains timely recommendations for reinvigorating global disarmament and non-proliferation efforts for consideration by Governments in the lead-up to the Review Conference, and we would urge people to look into the report.

With respect to action on nuclear disarmament, Australia welcomes the steps taken by the nuclear-weapon States and calls on all States possessing nuclear weapons to pursue negotiations on nuclear disarmament bilaterally, multilaterally, or both.

We welcome advice that the United States and Russia have reached agreement on the terms of a follow-on agreement to the Strategic Arms Reduction Treaty. That is very welcome news. Australia applauds the leadership on disarmament demonstrated by Russia and the United States. It is a strong signal of commitment, and we hope that all the nuclear-weapon States will make such commitments to the irreversible and verifiable disarmament of all types of nuclear weapons.

Australia considers that balanced and progressive steps towards nuclear disarmament — notably a fissile material cut-off treaty and the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test Ban Treaty (CTBT) — are vital to the continued political strength and vitality of the NPT. We are deeply disappointed that the Conference on Disarmament has been unable to commence negotiations on a treaty banning the production of fissile material for nuclear weapons, and we will continue to urge all members of the Conference to adopt a working plan to place priority on the immediate negotiation of a verifiable fissile material cut-off treaty.

The entry into force of the CTBT is also paramount. We welcomed sponsorship, for the first time, by all the NPT nuclear-weapon States of the CTBT resolution at the sixty-fourth session of the General Assembly, calling for the Treaty's early entry into force (resolution 64/69). Sponsorship by those five States — as I said, for the first time — sent a strong normative signal about the importance of this Treaty. We also welcome the support for the CTBT contained in Security Council resolution 1887 (2009).

Both the fourth Biennial Meeting of States and the first meeting of the Preparatory Committee on an arms trade treaty will take place in New York in mid-2010, as we know. This is a unique opportunity for all States to address the problem of illicit transfers of conventional arms through re-committing to a comprehensive and practical Programme of Action, and building on that commitment to set in train a positive negotiating process that will provide a legally binding basis for combating illicit transfers through treaty action in 2012.

Australia is pleased to have co-authored all General Assembly resolutions on an arms trade treaty and to have been a member of the Group of Governmental Experts. We will continue to apply ourselves, as we did in securing a consensus outcome at the Open-ended Working Group, to engage in substantive discussions this year.

We are also pleased to take up the position of assisting the Chair on the important crosscutting issue of international cooperation and assistance at the Fourth Biennial Meeting of States. Cooperation at the international level is obviously essential if we are to stem the flow of illicit weapons and reduce their devastating impact on people's lives.

In conclusion, the issues discussed in the Disarmament Commission are genuinely of paramount importance to all States. In view of this year's significant agenda, which encompasses both weapons of mass destruction and conventional weapons, and in particular in view of the Review Conference of the Parties to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons, to be held in May, this forum should not miss the opportunity to make practical and constructive contributions to truly addressing contemporary security challenges. It is up to all of us here to make this a reality. My own delegation will remain very active in the pursuit of those goals.

Mr. Davide (Philippines): The Philippines congratulates you, Mr. Chairman, and the other members of the Bureau on your well deserved election to guide this crucial session of the Disarmament Commission. The Philippines is confident that, under your able and dynamic leadership and guidance, this session will yield concrete positive results. The Philippines also expresses its gratitude to Member States for having elected it to serve on the Commission Bureau during this session. It likewise commends Ambassador Sergio Duarte, High Representative for Disarmament Affairs, for his statement.

Before proceeding any further, the Philippines wishes to state that it associates itself with the statement delivered by the representative of Indonesia on behalf of the Non-Aligned Movement.

The Philippines is especially cognizant of the favourable environment enveloping the field of disarmament in the past few months and is hopeful that the flexibility and more constructive approach demonstrated by delegations will continue to prevail throughout this session of the Commission and beyond. Such openness and such conduct would allow delegations to tirelessly pursue and strive to achieve through disarmament our ultimate goal of global peace. We are fully aware that the challenges to global peace facing us can be dealt with in part by the Disarmament Commission.

The Philippines remains convinced that the Commission is a vital mechanism to deal with the challenges in the field of disarmament. We fully subscribe to its principles and objectives and reaffirm its importance and continuing relevance in the light of its universal membership and its power, if not duty, to submit substantive recommendations to the General Assembly on urgent disarmament issues and concerns.

The Philippines believes that the most deadly weapons in existence are nuclear weapons. In this regard, I find it appropriate to quote a pertinent portion of the synopsis of the latest report of the International Commission on Nuclear Non-Proliferation and Disarmament, entitled "Eliminating Nuclear Threats: A Practical Agenda for Global Policymakers":

> "Nuclear weapons are the most inhumane weapons ever conceived, inherently indiscriminate in those they kill and maim, and with an impact deadly for decades. They are the only weapons ever invented that have the capacity to wholly destroy life on this planet, and the arsenals we now possess are able to do so many times over. The problem of nuclear weapons is at least equal to that of climate change in terms of gravity — and much more immediate in its potential impact."

Thus, it is incumbent upon all nations to see to it that these weapons do not spread and are eliminated in an irreversible and verifiable manner. Nuclear disarmament and nuclear non-proliferation are essential to promoting international peace and security. They are the cornerstones on which nations can build a society that is secure and free from the grave threat of a nuclear holocaust.

The Philippines respectfully submits that the best way to prevent the spread of nuclear weapons is through their complete and total elimination. The continued existence of these weapons will eventually lead to their proliferation, and the Philippines views this likely possibility as a grave threat to the international community.

Again, on this point, let me quote from the synopsis of the International Commission's report:

> "So long as any state has nuclear weapons, others will want them. So long as any such weapons remain, it defies credibility that they will not one day be used, by accident, miscalculation or design. And any such use would be catastrophic. It is sheer luck that the world has escaped such catastrophe until now."

The firm belief of the Philippines in the need to prevent the proliferation of nuclear weapons and the urgency of eliminating and dismantling these arms so that they may never threaten mankind is what led us to seriously consider and assume the responsibility of the presidency of the 2010 Review Conference of the Parties to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT). It takes this role very seriously but understands that success and progress can be achieved only through the collective effort of all sides and through balanced forward movement on all three pillars of the NPT, namely, nuclear disarmament, nuclear non-proliferation and the peaceful uses of nuclear energy. Accordingly, the Philippines will not rest, or tire, or weaken in seeking the support of Member States in ensuring a positive outcome at the upcoming Review Conference.

The Philippines commends the Russian Federation and the United States of America for their efforts in negotiating a follow-on agreement to the Strategic Arms Reduction Treaty and calls on all States possessing nuclear weapons to pursue negotiations on nuclear disarmament at the earliest possible time.

The Philippines is a staunch supporter of the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty (CTBT). It is host to three of the monitoring stations that are essential to the CTBT's operation. Hence, the Philippines does not hesitate to call on all States to ban all forms of nuclear testing and urges States whose

signatures and ratifications are necessary for the CTBT to enter into force to sign or ratify it, as the case may be, as soon as possible.

The Philippines attaches due importance to the establishment of a universal, legally binding instrument on negative security assurances to non-nuclear-weapon States. Furthermore, it is convinced of the usefulness and necessity of nuclear-weapon-free zones, welcomes the establishment of further such zones, and calls on the nuclear-weapon States to respect such zones. The Bangkok Treaty is a significant contribution of the Association of Southeast Asian Nations to this important effort. The Philippines welcomes the entry into force of the treaties establishing nuclear-weapon-free zones in Africa and in Central Asia. It looks forward to the early establishment of a nuclear-weapon-free zone in the Middle East.

The Philippines supports calls for an international conference that will set the parameters for the elimination of nuclear weapons and prohibit their production, stockpiling, transfer, use or threat of use, and provide for the destruction of such weapons. We attach great importance to ascertaining a specified time frame for the destruction of such weapons and the negotiation of a nuclear weapons convention.

The Philippines, as one of the countries that submitted pleadings to the International Court of Justice, recognizes and unequivocally supports the Court's unanimous conclusion that there exists an obligation to pursue in good faith and to bring to a conclusion negotiations leading to nuclear disarmament.

The Philippines submits that multilateral, regional and bilateral discussions should be continually undertaken as the tools to achieve success in this area. It calls on States to pursue multilateral negotiations, as agreed in the Final Document of the first special session of the General Assembly devoted to disarmament (resolution S-10/2).

We are now entering the fourth disarmament decade, 2010-2020. The work of our predecessors must be continued, and the success that was achieved during the first through the third disarmament decades has to be consolidated and built upon aggressively and progressively. The Philippines would, therefore, like to see the elements of a declaration of a fourth disarmament decade include relevant issues in the field of disarmament so that it addresses the concerns of all.

On practical confidence-building measures (CBMs) in the field of conventional arms, the Philippines recognizes that CBMs are essential to achieve international peace and security. Conventional weapons, though not as destructive as nuclear weapons, have actually killed or maimed more people due to their proliferation, widespread use and mass production. CBMs establish the climate of trust necessary for the reduction of tensions and the elimination of hostile situations. That in turn leads to more progress in terms of disarmament. Finally, the Philippines views multilateral cooperation as a key factor in disarmament. Through that approach, nations can make progress in the important field of disarmament.

In conclusion, the Philippine delegation would like to assure you, Mr. Chairman, and the other members of the Bureau of its readiness to participate in the most constructive and cooperative manner possible in this year's substantive session of the Disarmament Commission.

The Chairman (*spoke in French*): I should like to pay tribute to Mr. Davide, Permanent Representative of the Philippines, for his activity at the United Nations. If the information that I have received is true, his mission is at an end. We pay tribute to his work at the United Nations.

Mr. Muita (Kenya): I regret that, because of the arrangement of the conference room, I am not able to make eye contact with you, Mr. Chairman, as I deliver this statement. Nevertheless, I commence by congratulating you on your election as Chair of this session of the Disarmament Commission. We believe that your long experience in disarmament affairs will be of great assistance as you lead us through this important session. My delegation assures you of its full cooperation.

Let me at the outset associate myself with the statement made by the representatives of Nigeria on behalf of the African Group and of Indonesia on behalf of the Non-Aligned Movement.

The Disarmament Commission has tremendous potential to advance multilateral negotiations on disarmament issues. Sadly, it has often found itself stuck on procedural matters that eventually prevent discussion and agreement on substantive issues. In that context, we note that, although the Disarmament Commission could not agree on the elements of a draft declaration of the 2010s as the fourth disarmament

decade, at least we agreed on the agenda for the Commission's three-year cycle.

Kenya recognizes that nuclear weapons still represent the greatest threat to humanity and therefore calls for the total elimination of nuclear weapons as the surest guarantee of saving mankind from the effects of such weapons. My country has always held the belief that multilateral engagement, within the provisions of the United Nations Charter, remains the most effective approach to achieving credible universal nuclear disarmament and non-proliferation in order to safeguard and strengthen international peace and security.

We urge nuclear-weapon States to exercise due diligence in implementing all their obligations within the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons and other international treaty obligations and to desist from developing new types of nuclear weapons. Furthermore, States that possess nuclear weapons have a duty to give negative security assurances to non-nuclear States. We encourage the international community to continue to strive towards the early entry into force of the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty.

Kenya further calls on all States Members of the United Nations to demonstrate the necessary political will and cooperation so that we may begin to see movement towards the concrete recommendations in the field of disarmament and international peace and security that we have all been striving to achieve for decades.

My delegation also salutes the entry into force of regional nuclear-weapon-free zone treaties, including the African Nuclear-Weapon-Free Zone Treaty, or Pelindaba Treaty. We call on all African States that have not yet signed nor ratified the Treaty to urgently do so.

Kenya supports the establishment in the Middle East of a zone free of all weapons of mass destruction, and we encourage all Member States to support the urgent implementation of the relevant United Nations resolutions.

Kenya is a strong supporter of the United Nations Programme of Action on Small Arms and Light Weapons and looks forward to robust engagement at the forthcoming fourth Biennial Meeting of States. It is our hope that the Meeting will produce an effective and pragmatic outcome.

My country has continuously undertaken various initiatives at the national, regional and international levels to address the problem of the illicit circulation of small arms and light weapons, including the development of a legal and policy framework on small arms and light weapons. It is our expectation that the fourth Biennial Meeting will enhance and strengthen the capacity of regional organizations to combat the scourge of illicit arms transfers.

In that connection, Kenya has consistently supported the pursuit of a legally binding arms trade treaty to govern arms transfers so as to ensure that arms from the legitimate trade do not end up on the illicit market. In that regard, we are pleased that the international community has agreed that international action is needed to address the unregulated trade in conventional weapons. As an original co-author of the resolution on an arms trade treaty, Kenya strongly supports the convening of the United Nations Conference on the Arms Trade Treaty in 2012 and looks forward to meaningful deliberations in the forthcoming meetings of the Preparatory Committee.

As I conclude, I wish to state again that Kenya supports the views articulated by the representative of Nigeria on behalf of the African Group. In addition, Kenya wishes to highlight once more the nexus between peace and development and the need to address the issue comprehensively by looking into the linkage between disarmament and socio-economic development.

Kenya would also wish to see in the elements of the draft declaration of the 2010s as the fourth disarmament decade a strong reference to the problem of small arms and light weapons, which have a truly devastating effect in our part of the world.

Finally, taking a cue from last year's session, where members carried out discussions in an atmosphere of mutual respect and tolerance, we appeal for the same spirit during this session so that it will be possible to move forward in our important task.

Mr. Seruhere (United Republic of Tanzania): I am honoured to speak on behalf of the United Republic of Tanzania on the very important subject of disarmament. My delegation and I wish to congratulate you, Sir, on having been elected to chair this session.

We reassure you and your Bureau of our unqualified support and cooperation. I am confident that, with the exceptional qualities and experience that you possess, this session will end on schedule and with resounding success. I also wish to congratulate the other members of the Bureau on their election and, likewise, to express our full confidence and trust in their work.

At the outset, I wish to associate myself with the statement of the African Group, delivered by the representative of Nigeria, and that of the Non-Aligned Movement, delivered by Ambassador Kleib of Indonesia. We welcome the statement of Mr. Sergio Duarte, United Nations High Representative for Disarmament Affairs.

Armament and the arms race, during the greater part of the post-Second World War era, were prompted by the East-West antagonism of the cold war. Thus, international relations were characterized by mutual mistrust and suspicious and hegemonic ambitions, among other vices. We must not let those and other vices consume our common and cherished humanity. We must move forward together as one human race to rid our future and our planet of weapons on mass destruction, which make no distinction between friend and foe. They would annihilate innocent lives, including those of women and children, and destroy personal property and national economies. They would also cause extreme hostilities between nations and regions. Indeed they would damage our United Nations.

In the same vein, the menace and tragedy wrought by small arms and light weapons against innocent civilians, especially women and children, should be addressed effectively; it has to be eliminated sooner rather than later.

In our times, all States Members of the United Nations are obliged to address and overcome common challenges caused, inter alia, by problems of poverty — especially in developing countries, which constitute the majority of United Nations Members; by the worldwide deficit in governance and democracy; by disease, ignorance and the hardships occasioned on humanity by climate change and the global financial and economic crisis.

The United Nations cannot afford to imagine that these problems will not affect international peace and security. Neither can it afford to see more resources spent on nuclear armaments and proliferation while these problems are not addressed.

Elimination of nuclear weapons and other weapons of mass destruction would help nuclear-weapon States and aspiring ones to save resources and release them for development and growth, not only on their territories but also together with other Member States.

My delegation recognizes the right of Member States to self-defence as provided for in the Charter. However, that provision can be upheld without nuclear weapons or other weapons of mass destruction. Let all nations here present vow with one voice to live in a world free of such weapons and take decisive steps to realize that vow. In that regard, we commend the various initiatives already undertaken by leading nations and by the United Nations.

I conclude by renewing the support of my delegation for disarmament endeavours and by calling on Member States to negotiate with flexibility and a spirit of give and take to ensure that the possession of nuclear weapons and other weapons of mass destruction becomes a thing of the past.

The meeting rose at 4.15 p.m.